

REMARKS

Independent claims 1, 8, and 14 have been amended to set forth more clearly that the stud holding the release rail to the drawbar has an intermediate unthreaded body between first and second threaded ends. The body has a flat radial surface adjacent the first threaded end. The first threaded end turns into the release rail which has a flat surface wider than the width of the body of the stud. The flat radial surface on the stud and the flat surface on the release rail are abuttingly engageable. This abutting engagement resists bending stresses on the stud which would improperly weaken the threaded end (which, of course, is designed to fail by shear). The second end has a fastener that captures the stud to the drawbar. This connection permits the first threaded end of the stud to be turned so that the flat surfaces on the stud body and the release rail abut and then the stud is pulled tight on the drawbar.

The Examiner has rejected claims 1, 3, 4, 6-9, 11, 12, 14, and 15 as being anticipated under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) by Herbert U.S. Patent No. 3,610,434. Claim 5 has been rejected as unpatentable over Herbert in view of Dinitz U.S. Patent No. 6,056,471. Reconsideration is respectfully requested.

The Applicants' release mechanism is clearly different than that disclosed in Herbert. First of all, the end of the unthreaded portion of the stud of Herbert is not a flat radial surface and, even if it partially abuts the release rail, the stud is not supported against bending moments. Second, the stud does not have a second threaded end. The head 36 is fixed relative to the sleeve 37. Hence, if the sleeve is a little bit too long or the rail a little bit too far spaced from the release rail, the head will prevent the abutting engagement of the flat radial surface on the stud and the flat surface on the release rail. The Applicants' claims as amended clearly distinguish the primary reference, and there is no suggestion in any reference of record to modify the primary reference to meet the Applicants' amended claims.

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In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, it is urged this case is now in condition for allowance.

Respectfully submitted,

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